

Burk, W. Herbert. "The Chapel Windows." *Washington Chapel Chronicle*, April 15, 1915. 2-4.

THE WASHINGTON CHAPEL CHRONICLE

(2)

The Chapel Windows

The special committee on the windows of the Chapel is devoting itself to the preparation of a scheme of subjects for the artists. Experts in history and art are to be asked to assist in the development of a plan worthy of the place and the purpose of this great memorial.

The following is the plan suggested by the Rev. W. Herbert Burk, in a preliminary report to the committee:

The Washington Memorial Chapel was planned to commemorate Washington the Churchman, to represent him as a product of those influences and forces which were manifested in the history of the Church of England, of which he was a member, and in which, and through which he had received such a large part of his education. This determined the style of architecture, and any windows planned ought to be devised in harmony with this purpose.

In addition, the Washington Memorial Chapel stands for the spiritual in the history of the famous encampment. The men of Valley Forge struggled with hunger and cold and disappointment, and they were sustained by the religious faith of Washington.

In view of these facts the Windows ought to be more than a series of illustrations of American history. They ought to represent the place which religion has occupied in the development of the human race. They ought to represent that mighty movement in the history of humanity which beginning in the Incarnation reached a new stage in the formation of the American people. The Nation of to-day will be represented in the Roof of the Republic. How that Nation came to be ought to be the story of the Windows. They ought to bid visitors to the shrine: "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." ([Isaiah 51:1](#)).

THE ABUNDANT LIFE

Beginning with the Chancel Window the series ought to move forward to the founding of the American Nation. This window will be above the Altar. It should therefore represent the purpose of the Sacrifice upon the Cross. It ought to depict the spirit in which our blessed Lord lived and died. He has expressed that in these words: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it abundantly." (St. John 10:10.)

This sentence ought therefore be the keynote for the Window. Its relation to the Altar, with its teaching that Christ is the true Bread of Life, is such that it binds window and altar

together. A detailed treatment of the Window should follow His declaration of His own work as sent by Him to St. John the Baptist. “The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosesoever shall not be offended in me.” ([St. Matt. 11:5, 6](#)).

The Window ought to culminate in His gift of the Holy Spirit to His Apostles.

CHRIST AND THE NATIONS

There is only one side window in the Sanctuary. It ought to continue the theme of this window. That is it ought to represent Christ giving life to the Nations. Its beginning ought to be the great commission: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (St. Matt. 28:19-20.) Its culmination ought to be the evangelization of the American Indian. This window will form the transition from the personal life and work of Christ to His dealings with the Nation. On entering the Nave this will be represented in two windows, one on the right and the other on the left showing the world movements which led up to the establishment of the American Nation.

(3)

THE NEW BIRTH

Together they will represent the Renaissance. The Renaissance period and all it stands for may be traced back to our Lord’s words to Nicodemus, “Ye must be born again.” (St. John 3:7.) This should picture the new birth of humanity and especially the Italian Renaissance, from which our Nation has inherited so much.

FREEDOM THROUGH TRUTH

The Window on the left will represent the English Renaissance, and its theme should be the words of our Lord: “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (St. John 8:32.) This of course should fully picture the Reformation in England including the translation of the English Bible, the adoption of the Prayer Book, etc.

DISCOVERY

Next to the Window of the Italian Renaissance should be one representing that spirit of discovery born of the Renaissance, whose Scriptural theme is expressed by our Lord in these words: “Seek, and ye shall find.” (St. Matt. 7:7.)

SETTLEMENT

Closely associated with the Discoverers were the Pioneers. We may show this relation by taking the rest of the verse quoted for the last window. “Knock, and it shall be opened unto you.”

EXPANSION AND DEVELOPMENT

Our next pair of Windows ought to represent the development of this Continent. This is born of our original theme, the abundance of life. It ought to be represented along the two lines of increase in numbers and increase in the spirit of nationality.

These two windows find their religious theme in the Parables of the Mustard Seed and of the Leaven.

THE REVOLUTION

We believe the Revolution like all effort was a part of our national progress and an unavoidable national experience. The theme of the next window should be the Revolution. Its text should be: "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (St. John 16:33.)

PATRIOTISM

The companion of the above window ought to represent the Nation's spirit of Patriotism. We ought to be guided in our selection of subjects for this window by the following text: "Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it." (St. Luke 17:33.)

The final windows ought to represent the founding of the Nation.

DEMOCRACY

The Declaration of Independence stands for the equality of the people of America. This spirit of democracy ought to be represented in a window which will commemorate the gaining of independence. This Democracy has its origin in the fatherhood of God, and is thus expressed by our Blessed Lord, and is thus expressed by our Blessed Lord. "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." (St. Matt. 5:45.)

THE UNION

By the adoption of the Constitution the people of the thirteen colonies became one people. In this act there was an answer to our Lord's high priestly prayer: "That they all may be one." (St. John 17:21.)

WASHINGTON

A nation is not an indistinct mass of people but is made up of individuals. Washington was an individual part of the Nation and represented in his own life the progress we have traced in the windows of the Nave. The west window should therefore represent the life of Washington, beginning with his baptism, in obedience of the divine command, and culminating in his inauguration as first President of the United States.

(4)

Mr. Burk says that this plan may be considered a working basis, and that it has the advantage that it presents historical subjects in relation to the great source of the life of man. Mechanically the plan follows the structure of the Chapel, and through the nave there are five sets of subjects, one for each bay. In each bay the subjects are complimentary. This is shown in the following arrangement of subjects:

THE SANCTUARY

East window: THE ABUNDANT LIFE

Right: Christ and the Nations

THE NAVE

The New Birth.	Freedom through Truth.
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Discovery.	Settlement.
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Expansion.	Development.
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The Revolution.	Patriotism.
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Democracy.	The Union.
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WASHINGTON